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Let's hope the 49ers have a GREAT season- it's good for Sunday rides!

It was like the old days, when the 49ers were the best in the league. You wait until the game starts, and the roads are deserted! And that's how it was during today's 49er-Green Bay Packers game. Few people on the road (cars or even bikes, for that matter), nice weather (mid-70s to 82 degrees, although it seemed like it was a headwind no matter which direction I rode) and a fairly-intense ride for such a short distance.

I could have done the usual; head over Old LaHonda out to Pescadero and back via Tunitas. But I decided to do something different, something a big "uglier". South to Cupertino, Stevens Creek to Redwood Gulch, then up 9, north on Skyline then down into Woodside. Using Olive Hill & Canada Road as the starting point (which, of course, is the center of the universe, since the Tuesday/Thursday-morning ride begins there), it's almost exactly 50 miles and almost exactly 5000 feet of climbing. But, it's a lot tougher than the numbers indicate, because starting the main climb via Redwood Gulch is a killer!

I was alone today (Kevin's off the bike for about a week following his surgery) so the pacing was up to me. Unfortunately, in the post-Strava era, that means the pacing is actually up to no darned good! My legs felt like rubber for the first hour or so, and actually didn't feel much better starting up Redwood Gulch either, but the legs were turning, the bike was moving, and I was playing mind games, trying to convince myself that I could actually relax on a 20% grade.

There was no rest for the wicked at the top of 9; I could have stopped for a cold drink at Mr. Mustard, but instead pushed on, thinking maybe I could get home before the game ended. That would be pretty cool; get in a significant ride entirely within the time the 49er game was played. Further incentive to push hard came at the bottom of 84 as I headed towards Woodside; my average speed was exactly 17mph at that point, and I really didn't want to finish the ride at 16-something. 17 sounds so much more respectable! Those last 5 miles home weren't easy, but I ended up at 17.3mph average speed, no stops (except for that darned light at Summerhill) and pretty darned tires. Oh, and in time to see the final three minutes of the game!